

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. An ink tank for an ink jet printer, which comprises:

a casing having a bottom wall and a front wall with an opening provided therein, and a bag disposed in said casing, said bag being collapsible into a sheet-like configuration and having a top wall, a bottom wall, a front edge and a spout provided in a central region of said front edge and located at the position of said front wall opening, wherein the width (W) of the top and bottom walls of the bag, when measured in a flat, sheet-like configuration and in the direction of the front edge, is larger than the width of the casing, and the front wall opening is located near the bottom wall of the casing.

2. The ink tank according to claim 1, wherein the spout is fixedly held in the opening of the front wall of the casing.

3. The ink tank according to claim 1, wherein the top wall and the bottom wall of the bag are interconnected by an inwardly projecting fold at the front edge of the bag, and the spout is incorporated in a seal provided between the bottom wall and a lower flap of the fold.

4. The ink tank according to claim 3, wherein another inwardly projecting fold interconnects the top wall and the bottom wall at a rear edge of the bag.

5. The ink tank according to claim 3, wherein the top wall and the bottom wall of the bag are directly interconnected by seals extending along lateral edges of the bag.

6. The ink tank according to claim 1, wherein the spout has a retaining piece which has a lens-shaped cross section and is inserted between wall portions of the bag, which form a seal.

7. The ink tank according to claim 1, wherein the wall material of the bag has a laminated structure including at least two layers of synthetic resin with a metal layer interposed therebetween.

8. The ink tank according to claim 1, wherein the bottom wall of the bag is stiffer than the top wall.

9. The ink tank according to claim 1, wherein the width of the bag corresponds to the width of the casing plus twice the height of the casing, and the bag is disposed in the casing in a U-shaped configuration with two side portions thereof being bent upwardly into the vicinity of a top wall of the casing.

10. The ink tank according to claim 9, further comprising a collapsible induction fitment extending from the top wall of the casing and into the interior of the casing.

11. The ink tank according to claim 1, wherein the casing is composed of two cup-shaped shells welded together at a weld seam which surrounds the bag disposed in the casing.

12. A method of filling an ink tank with ink, wherein the ink is introduced through a spout into a bag disposed in a casing in a collapsed and bent state in which at least one side portion of the bag is bent upwardly and supported at a side wall of the casing, whereby, by introducing the ink, the top wall of the bag is displaced upwardly away from the bottom wall.